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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture

Office of Communications

Electronic Media Services

Washington, DC 20250-1340

Letter No. 2646

January 21, 1994

EZ/EC -- Applications are being accepted at USDA for communities to be designated as Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC). The zones and communities will receive special consideration for various federal programs and other assistance. Three rural empowerment zones and 30 rural enterprise communities will be designated. Applicants must provide detail regarding economic opportunity, community development, partnership, and goals. Communities that apply but are not chosen will qualify for assistance in seeking regulation waivers for federal programs. Deadline for application to USDA's Rural Development Administration is June 30. **Contact: Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623.**

CORN -- 1993 corn for grain production is estimated at 6.3 billion bushels, 33 percent below the record high 1992 crop. The U.S. yield per acre for corn is 100.7 bushels, 30 bushels below the record high yield of 131 bushels set last year. Corn stocks total nearly 6 billion bushels, down 25 percent from last year. Of the total stocks, almost 4 billion bushels are stored on farms, 34 percent less than a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 2 billion bushels are down only 2 percent from the previous year. **Contact: Charles Van Lahr (202) 720-7369.**

WHEAT -- Winter wheat seedings for 1994 are estimated at 50 million acres, down 2 percent from 1993 levels. Hard winter wheat seedings total 35 million acres, soft red winter wheat is 10 million acres, and white totals 4 million acres. Favorable conditions exist for durum wheat. Farmers in Arizona and California intend to seed 130,000 acres, up 35 percent from last year. Seeding will continue through this month. All wheat in storage totals 1.5 billion bushels, about the same as last year. On-farm storage is 656 million bushels. Off-farm is 930 million bushels, both about the same as last year. **Contact: Ed Allen (202) 219-0841.**

SOYBEANS -- 1993 soybean production totaled 1.8 billion bushels, down 17 percent from 1992. Yield per acre averaged 32 bushels, 5.6 bushels below the record set in 1992. Soybean storage totals 1.5 billion bushels, down 15 percent from year ago levels. On-farm stocks, at 677 million bushels are down 23 percent and account for 44 percent of total stocks. Off-farm holdings are down 9 percent at 877 million bushels. **Contact: Dan Kerestes (202) 720-9526.**

PEANUTS -- Production of peanuts totaled 3.3 billion pounds in 1993, 22 percent below the 1992 crop and the lowest level in ten years. Planted acreage of 1.7 million acres was up 2 percent. Yields averaged 2,032 pounds per acre, 530 pounds below last year. **Contact: Scott Sanford (202) 219-0840.**

COTTON -- All U.S. cotton production in 1993 totaled 16 million bales, down nearly 43,000 bales from 1992. Texas upland cotton experienced a large increase, 56 percent above last year, due to harvesting 91 percent of planted acreage compared to only 56 percent in 1992. **Contact: Roger Latham (202) 720-5944.**

RICE -- Average yield of all U.S. rice was 5,510 pounds per acre, 226 pounds below the 1992 average. Rice production totaled 156 million CWT during 1993, 13 percent below year-earlier levels. **Contact: Janet Livezey (202) 219-0840.**

OATS -- The U.S. produced more oats in 1886 than were produced last year. Production is estimated at 206 million bushels, 30 percent below last year's crop. Area harvested for grain was 3.7 million acres, down 16 percent from 1992 and a record low. Yields per harvested acre averaged 54 bushels. **Contact: Thomas Tice (202) 219-0840.**

GRAIN STORAGE -- Five states account for more than half of the nation's on-farm grain storage capacity. Iowa leads with 1.7 billion bushels followed by Minnesota with 1.3 billion; Illinois with 1.2 billion; Nebraska with 1 billion; and North Dakota at 810 million bushels. U.S. on-farm grain storage capacity totals 11.6 billion bushels, down 4 percent from 1992 levels. **Contact: Roger Hexem (202) 219-0419.**

U.S. FOOD AID -- USDA has allocated \$326 million dollars for commodity loans and grants under the Food For Peace Program in fiscal year 1994. An additional \$108 million is being held in reserve to fund unforeseen needs during the year. The concessional sales program promotes exports of U.S. agricultural commodities and fosters development in countries receiving the aid. **Contact: Mary Chambliss (202) 720-3573.**

GRAZING FEES -- The new grazing fee for western public lands administered by USDA's Forest Service and the Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management is \$1.98 per head month. A head month is the amount of forage needed to sustain one cow and her calf, or one horse, or five sheep or goats for one month. The 1994 grazing fee for the national grasslands is \$2.08 per head month, a four-cent increase from 1993. Last year the Forest Service collected \$9 million in public land grazing fees in the 16 western states. Half the amount is used to improve rangelands, and half is returned to the States and the U.S. treasury. **Contact: Pamela Finney (202) 205-1584.**

LABELS FOR COOKING & HANDLING -- Publication is expected soon of the final rule for an instruction label regarding the safe handling and cooking of raw meat and poultry. Comment period for the proposed rule ended last month. The proposed label notes that some food products may contain bacteria that can cause illness if mishandled or cooked improperly. The label notes that raw meat and poultry should be thawed in a refrigerator or microwave; kept separate from other foods or working surfaces; cooked thoroughly; consumed or refrigerated immediately; and hands and utensils should be washed after touching raw meats. Some firms have voluntarily attached the labels to meat and poultry products while USDA moves forward with the process to mandate the labels. **Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623.**

MAKE MINE OIL -- A study by USDA researchers shows that the semisolid fats found in stick margarine are less friendly to the heart than the oils they come from. A test group of men and women on a cholesterol-lowering diet had the "bad" LDL cholesterol reduced only 58 percent as much when corn oil stick margarine was substituted for corn oil in their diets. Volunteers in the tests using only corn oil had a more favorable ratio of total cholesterol to HDL cholesterol, the kind that protects arteries from damage, than did those using stick margarine. The findings should discourage use of stick margarine in cholesterol-lowering diets. **Contact: Alice Lichtenstein (617) 556-3127.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1911 -- Scientists are studying the special nutritional needs of older Americans. Jim Henry reports. (Weekly 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1393 -- A financial plan; are consumers less bargain conscious?; celebrating the family; video/audioclubs; broccoli, nutritional powerhouse. (Weekly 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE FEATURES #1903 -- Will GATT pass?; GATT and meat exports; new crop production/price estimates; soybeans, lower supplies/higher prices; new role for ethanol? (Weekly features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1656 -- No quick weight loss; strain of dieting; nutritional newcomer; natural cooking oil; soybean savings. (Weekly research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Thursday, January 27, world tobacco situation, hearings held on organic livestock standards; Friday, January 28, cattle on feed; Monday, January 31, agricultural prices, world dairy situation, world poultry situation; Tuesday, February 1, catfish production, crop and weather update, horticultural exports. No reports are scheduled for February 2-7, but our Newsline will be updated daily with breaking news and features. **Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.**

USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES

Will Pemble reports on plumcots, a new hybrid fruit developed by USDA research scientists. **Pat O'Leary** reports on a Soil Conservation Service program called "Neighbor To Neighbor." It provides farmers an opportunity to learn beneficial practices from other farmers through on-site demonstrations.

Lynn Wyvill reports on research at USDA laboratories in Peoria, IL that is aimed at making cooking oils better.

DeBoria Janifer reports on carbonated beverages made from milk. The products are the result of USDA research in New Orleans, LA.

Dave Luciani of Michigan State University reports on a sweet secret. Michigan wines rival some of California's best.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 4, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT; Saturdays 10:00 a.m., EDT; Mondays 8:00 a.m., EDT.

OFFMIKE

BUSINESSES AND PRODUCERS...will be saluted on National Agriculture Day, March 17, says **Jim Flemming** (WDZQ/WCZQ/WDZ, Decatur, IL). Planning is underway on a banquet for 800 people. Former Secretary of Agriculture **Earl Butz** will be the featured speaker. Two producers will be selected for Farmer of the Year, one a young farmer, and the stations will report on their production operations throughout the year. Jim also says farm income in his area is expected to increase. Prices for corn and beans are well above average, and producers in his region had record yields.

BITTER COLD...temperatures with wind chill below minus 50 degrees has producers concerned about livestock stress, says **Mike Buchanan** (KBIZ, Ottumwa, IA). The line of Alberta Clippers on the DTN screen means there's little relief in sight. Mike covered the Iowa Pork Congress, January 18-20 in Des Moines, about 10,000 producers attended, and the Iowa Conservation Tillage Conference held in Ottumwa. Mike says the floods last year have caused a heightened interest in conservation tillage.

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MODERNIZING MEETINGS...for today's agriculture have boosted attendance, says **Bob Bosold** (WAXX, Eau Claire, WI). New themes such as financing, computerized feed rations, and expansion presented by out-of-state speakers are providing information producers want. Bob says the CANN network ceased operations December 31. WAXX served as its flagship station.

WARM TEMPERATURES...this time of year? Yes, in southern Texas, says **Jim Farr** (KKUB, Brownfield, TX). Temperatures reach 60 degrees, but it is very dry. Only 11 inches of rain all last year, and none on the horizon this year for several weeks. Jim says irrigation systems are selling well, raising irrigated acreage in his area above 50 percent.

OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENT...of three weeks is scheduled for **Larry Burchfield** (KWCK, Searcy, AR). Larry is a volunteer in the Farmer-To-Farmer program serving in Biskek, Kyrgyzstan, a former member nation of the USSR, Feb. 17 - Mar. 12. He'll conduct training in banking and financial management, information critical to that nation's agricultural community.

VIC POWELL

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